

Report of Lieutenant-Colonel Wharton J. Green, Second North Carolina Battalion:

ON BOARD STEAMER S. R. SPAULDING,
OFF ROANOKE ISLAND, N. C.,
February 18, 1862.

SIR:—I herewith submit a report of the skirmish in which my battalion (Second North Carolina) was engaged on Saturday, the 8th instant:

In obedience to orders from Adjutant-General Cooper, received on the evening of 30 January, I struck camp in the vicinity of Wilmington on the morning of the 1st instant, and proceeded hither with all possible dispatch. Owing to the want of transports, we were detained two days and upward in Norfolk, leaving that place on Wednesday, the 5th instant, in tow of the canal tug boat White.

On Friday when about thirty miles distant from the Island, continued discharges of artillery informed us of the progress of a fight between the Federal fleet and Confederate batteries. Being entirely ignorant of the topography of the Island, and not knowing where or to whom to report, I left our transports about twenty miles hence and came on in the steamer for information. Having obtained which, I returned to my men and crowded them on the smallest number of transports that would contain them, and then started. The night was very dark and stormy, with the wind against us, consequently our progress was slow.

After beating about until midnight our pilot declared that he had lost his reckoning, and as we had only a fathom and a half of water, thought it safer to wait for daylight.

About 2 a. m. Saturday, a number of Confederate gunboats passed us from the direction of the island, one of them running into the schooner Beauregard (one of our transports) and seriously injuring her. In reply to our challenge and statement of our condition, all the answer we could get was that one of the boats was the Beaufort, the other the ———. Had they stopped in their flight long enough to exchange pilots with us, or even to give ours the necessary instructions as to his course, my battalion would have reached the island in time to have participated in the entire action.